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The Bulletin of Tibetology seeks to serve the specialist as well as the general reader with an interest in this field of study. The motif portraying the Stupa on the mountains suggests the dimensions of the field.

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MALLI KĀ

Marianne Winder

One of the best known commentaries on the ‘Four Medical Tantras’, the rūgyud bkā, is the Vaidūrya smon.po written by the Des.srid Sams.rgyan rgya.stho during the 17th century. Its full title is: gSUM ba.rig.pa’i rgyan. lcogs. sken. bkwa’i ldun ba rgyan. rgyud bkā ’i gyal. byed ba.sur. smon.po’i. malli ka. ‘The blue lapis lazuli jasmine ornament to remember the Medicine Buddha’s teaching of medicine explaining the Four Tantras.’ At least, this is the title of part one. The other three parts bear the same title up to and including smon.po’, but instead of malli.ka they have phur.ba. Now, phur.ba means ‘rosary’. This rosary consists of smon.po, ‘blue’, bādor or vaidūrya, that is, ‘lapis lazuli’ or ‘beryl’, ‘cat’s eye’, or aquamarine. As I have argued in my paper called Vaidūrya, in this context the word does not mean a specific gem as much as simply ‘something very precious’. Thus, it is a rosary consisting of very precious stones. The word phur.ba in the three other parts looks as if it replaced the mali.ka of the first part. What is this mali.ka?

The word is obviously a borrowing from the Sanskrit. What does it mean? The Sanskrit and the Pali words mālīka usually mean ‘jasmine’. The word occurs as early as in the Mahābhārata and many more times in Sanskrit literature. The word did not enter the Tibetan language as a loan word through medical texts. The rūgyud bkā usually provides Tibetan words for plants with healing properties. There are very few
borrowings from the Sanskrit such as सूर्यवर्धन 'cannabis' and पीपल 'pepper'. The word मलिका is not amongst them, so it is to be concluded that whatever it means, for instance, 'jasmine', does not have healing properties. If the word did not enter the title of the SDe.ṣ.ra.ṇ's work from medical literature where did it come from?

One of the possibilities in the work on the art of Poesie by Dandin called Kayawāra which was a prescribed text in Gelugpa colleges. Dandin, Sanskrit Dandī, whose Tibetan name is dbayul-las can, lived from the 8th to the 9th century. His 'Mirror of Poetry' was translated into Tibetan by Stīłkṣikṣa and Sōkṣṭon in a Saṅgha monastery of Western Tibet, and edited by dpal-bzan blo-ge ba-btan pa.

The passage where मलिका occurs belongs to the second section of the Saṅga dbang rgyal-ston which is called Dcon byi rgyan, 'Embellishments is the interpretation'. Verse 214 says: 'The desire to describe a characteristic in a manner transcending worldly limits is (giving rise to) Hyperbole; it is the best of figures.' For example: 215: 'Wearing wreaths of मलिका, all their hair adorned with fresh mandala and clad in linen garments the ascertainment-seekers are not to be distinguished in the moonlight.' 216: 'Here is asserted, as being of a pre-eminent degree, the abundance of the moonlight.' The hyperbole consists in stating that the moonlight was so bright that the different people moving in it could not be distinguished. The word मलिका here means 'jasmine'.

The Tibetan translation of the Kayawāra passage reads as follows:

Verse 214: मलिका, को ḍhreṅ, bshad bstan can !

jwa ammon pa'i sdom dnam pher !
Verse 215: zla. ba'i. 'od.ma.hag.pa. 'id \n\nVerse 216: dga'. sa.khyud.kyi. nu.ma. dzh \n
The Kāvyadāsā translation has been included in the Tanjur.

Though this textbook of Poetics was a setwork in Gelugpa colleges, this passage does not have anything to do with Buddhism. It seems therefore to be worthwhile to look for another well-known text which might have introduced the word 

The relevant Dhammapada passage occurs in verse 11 of the chapter called ‘Flowers’ which is chapter 4. It is verse 94 of the whole of the Dhammapada: ‘The perfume of flowers blows not against the wind nor does the fragrance of saunil-
wood, tagara and jasmine. The fragrance of the virtuous does blow against the wind: the virtuous man pervades every direction. What is meant is the atmosphere of peace and friendliness surrounding the people whose mind is concentrated on the spiritual side of life. The word 'jasmine' here translates Pali maññī. In the next verse, 121 (55), the word does not occur in the Pali version but it does in the Tibetan one. I, therefore, will give a translation of the Pali first:

'Sandalwood, Tagara, lotus, jasmine (here the Pali word maññī is used for 'jasmine' instead of maññī). Of all these kinds of fragrance, the perfume of virtue is by far the best.'

The Tibetan translation in the Udanavarga reads as follows: The scent of flowers does not move without being directed by the wind, (Sng. Tog. dEri. nDzi. phyogs. miN. miN. iN. 'gro:)

nor does that of roots, Tagara or Sandalwood (rtsBa. ba. rGya. spN. tan. dam. rNams. kYid. miN. iN.)

The holy scent moves without being directed by the wind (dam. pa'i. dEri. nDzi. phyogs. miN. 'gro. ste. iN.)

The virtuous man pervades all directions (phyogs. rNams. kyi. tu. ston. dRigs. tU. rNams. kYi. khri. iN. iN.)

The word 'jasmine' occurs in the next stanza:

'Tagara and sandalwood, (rGya. spN. dam. ston. dam. dam.)

Blue lotus and jasmine (tSh. la. dam. led. Beckh). maN. iN. An. (Peking Tanjur, Osah, maN. iN. iN.):

better than these kinds of incense (spN. rGya. rNams. tdi. tag. paN. iN.)

(Peking and Smar than Tanjur) the scent of discipline comes as a fragrant offering, (tSh. khy. dRigs. tU. tSh. maN. dU. phyin): (Peking Tanjur) the scent of keeping the discipline comes as an offering (tSh. khy. dRigs. tU. tSh. maN. dU. phyin):
It would be very plausible that the sDe.srid if he composed the title of the Vaidurya smon po himself borrowed the word from the Tibetan Udānavarga. However, the form used there is m.l.l.a. or m.l.l.a. and not m.l.l.a. There is another passage in a work composed in the Pali language, namely the Mahāsvāmīda ṣārvaṇavarga, the lineage or history of the Elephant Rocky Forest Temple in Ceylon, composed during the reign of Pandita Parakramaśāhī of Dambedenyı (1266-1301 A.D.), which contains a passage where the word m.l.l.ā蔗 occurs.

This time with a long first a and a single is

'The slander darts of the wicked become blunted (on reaching) the shield of forbearance of the righteous and are changed into the flowers of praise (bestowed) in the society (of the just). Whence they become bound with the flowery chaplets of their virtues.' This refers to the practice of adorning people with wreaths or garlands as marks of respect.

Here the word does no longer mean 'jasmine' but 'chaplet' or 'garland'. It being the diminutive form of m.l.l.ā蔗. Association with this word which is the same in Sanskrit as in Pali may have caused the sDe.srid if whoever composed these titles to use m.l.l.ā蔗 in the titles of the other three volumes. The fact remains that the first volume of the Vaidurya smon po uses the word m.l.l.ā蔗 in its title and not m.l.l.a.

Therefore the idea for it does probably not come from the Udānavarga but from Badin's work, while the title of the other three volumes may have been influenced by the thought of m.l.l.a.

In Pāṇīki m.l.l.ā蔗 can mean, apart from the jasmine plant and flower, an earthenware vessel of a particular shape.

125 Sanskrit m.l.l.ā蔗 from, which compounds with m.l.l.ā蔗 are
formed can also mean a lampstand or a lamp. Though the shape is not specified it is probably that of a jasmine blossom. In Sinhalese it means a vessel made of a coconut shell for containing oil. This seems to suggest that the vessel received their name because of the association with scented oil remaining of jasmine blossoms. But it is unlikely that the meaning 'vessel' was in the mind of the *De.zrid Sa.h.rgyas rgya.m ras.b."

6) Translated from the Sanskrit into Tibetan by N. Dgongs. 7) J.M. Whiting. vol. 820 711, p. 11, line 1–2, also ed. Hermann Becker, Berlin, G. Reimer, 1911, p. 26, item VI, 1–15. Also Tibetan Tripitaka. Peking ed. by T. Suzuki, Reprinted under the supervision of the Osaka University, Kyoto. vol. 39, item 826, no. 6106, p. 92, f. 278a, line 6 to f. 279b, line 1. Also Mol. akar NS Kanjur, folio 1245–88. The NS Kanjur at the British Library is going to be described in detail by the Vens. Lama Ch. and Dipnec, Curator of Tibetan Manuscripts and Vyoigraphy at the British Library, in the near future.
8) What is least are the five medicinal roots: 1) rs.h.e. (Polygonatum officinale), 2) i.ca.A (Delilum venus), 3) ho.r.ya.(Polygonatum falcatum), 4) d.do.ga.mha (Asperagus laticaulis), 5) g.ka.m (Tribulus terrestris).

11) I am indebted to Mr. K.D. Somadasa of the British Library for explaining to me that the word in this context could not mean 'jazzle' but had to mean something like 'garland' because the word 'bound with' is literally used in the Pali text.


MADHYAMA-ŚATKA
BY MAITRIGUPTA

Dr. Mark Tatz

This brief text, which has no known commentary, identifies itself (verse 3) as an account of philosophic systems (a siddha-kāta). In it, Maitrigupta focuses upon several schools' understanding of 'middle way'. Probably, the text was composed as a topical outline for teaching. It is one of a number of his works expounding images or technical terms from Mahāyāna tradition. A Sanskrit version survives, as well as one Tibetan translation.

The work was studied and translated into English by Suniti Kumar Pathak, and published in the Adyar Library Bulletin in 1961. There the Sanskrit is reprinted with amendments, and the Tibetan is transliterated from the Nanthang edition of the Sacred Canon. To the study is prefixed an account of the author, Maitrigupta. The use of Tibetan sources signals a knowledgeable and conscientious approach to the subject matter. However, insufficient materials were brought to bear for either study (that of the author, or that of the text) to avoid errors. This is an attempt to bring up to date our understanding of the text, but without correcting the work of Pathak on every point.

Maitrigupta, also known as maitripāda (to the Tibetans, maitripa) and Asvaghosa, is dated ca. 1007-1085. He is known, among other things, for his exposition of a variant of Mahāmudrā ('Great Symbol') philosophy known as amanupalāra. His usage of this term will be explored in context of the translation of another of his works.
The Tibetan redactor Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, in his analytic list of works that expand the Amantikāra system, describes the Six Verses as teaching the philosophic view that characterizes Tantrism. This is the source of the Nārthang catalogue's identification of this work as "teaching the tantric view" (Fætør 539-40). The context describes the text, however, not the author.

Maitrīgupta shows how each of the four Mahāyāna philosophic systems defines the term "middle way". The term is used interchangeably with "freedom from the four extremes" (asserting eternalism, nihilism, neither, and both), and "dependent origination" in context of the correct approach, Maitrīgupta makes the further identifications "clear light nature of a meditational deity" and "non-dual great bliss". The terms "empty" and "unarising" are also adduced as equivalents.

Three verses present the views of three systems; three verses follow with the preferred interpretation.

To explain and expand the verses would include recreate the Mahāyāna sections of Advayavajra's Ratoṣvajī, his full exposition of siddhānta. But a translation of the Ratoṣvajī is forthcoming. So let me limit myself to identifying the four systems, not all of which find room to be named in the Six Verses.

1) Those who propose that cognition possesses forms (the sākāra-vāda) describe the object of cognition as existing in a momentary mode. The sākāra-vāda consists of the Saṃkṣetika school, which is regarded as Mahāyāna, plus the sākāra-vāda branch of the Yogācāra.

2) Those who propose the absence of forms (the nirākāra-vāda branch of the Yogācāra), describe reality as an expression of self-awareness.
3) Among the Madhyamikas, those who profess illusion-like non-duality (the Māyopanātāra-vyāsa) describe reality as transparent, or clear light.

4) The Madhyamikas to which we adheres, those who profess the unsupportedness of all phenomena (the Appattisthāyatāvyāsa), is expounded in more detail in the second third of verses.

In the edition that follows, the Sanskrit has been corrected by reference to the Tibetan, and to meter.

English Translation

1) To professors of Sākāra, 'freedom from the four extremes' means understanding that the object of cognition exists in a momentary mode, empty of thought-constructions and lacking objectification.

2) 'Middle way' is defined [by professors of Mīrīkāra] in terms of a self-awareness that is not will; it appears as blue, etc. objects, but characteristics do not arise in it.

3) To professors of Māyopanātāra, 'freedom from the four extremes' is [to know that] the characteristics are false, and [in reality] clear light.

The following system has evidence for its beliefs.

4) To know the emptiness of objects is to know emptiness free of appearance and free of coverings. That is the Middle Way from which the 'subsequent' or conventional has been purged.

5) Whether it is clear light or not, in reality it is unobjectifiable. Because things are by nature unarising in any way, we define 'middle way' without reference to them.

6) To possess the clear light nature of a mediational unity is to be 'free from the four extremes'. To enjoy the nature of non-real great bliss is identical with dependent origination.
SanatkEt Edition

catuṣkoṭivinirmuktam/ jānavasteu saṅgaṇikam//
kalpaśānyan anālaṃbhyaṃ/ vidōḥ saṅkṛavādinaḥ//1//
sveṣaṃvitār anuchoḍādī/ niśādīnām bhāṣaṃti//
abhimānān anupūrṇaḥ/ mahāyamānān pratijet mañāḥ//2//
catuṣkoṭivinirmuktah/ prakāśāllakṣaṇaḥ//
nīyonāṇāvayavocita/ siddhānto pramāṇaṁśaṅgah//3//

vastavoḥya tu yā vittir/ nirāvila niraśjaḥ//
medhyamān paripaṭa saṅs/ tatpratītte suddhavamśvaḥ//4//
prakāśo vāprakāśo vā/ tattvato nopaśaṅgaḥ/
sravatā jñātri-patrīvā/ medhyamānām aparame viṣaḥ//5//
catuṣkoṭivinirmuktah/ prakāśo devatānakaḥ//
sukhamāvyaśvabhāvaḥ/ pratijyotpādenstrahaḥ//6//

Notes

1 Work no. 18 in Haraprasad Shastri, ed., Advayavāraśāstra (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1937).
2 Vaidyan’s translation by Vajrapāni and Māra-tseho Tshul-khrims-rgyal-ma. Otani Catalogue no. 3074, Tohoku Catalogue no. 2230.
of the 4th International Seminar On Tibetan Studies (Munich 1985, in press); and idem, ‘Maitrīpa and Rataṃkaraṇāntī’ in Burmick Abhino Commemorative Volume (Dharmsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, forthcoming).

5 Advayavijay, Amaṇipāṭhā-uddeśa, Tohoku no.

2249 = Shastri, ed., op. cit. no. 21


MADHYAMASATKA
Derge Tanar

བན་ས་ས་གཞན་ལས་པ་
སངས་ས་ས་ས་ལ་

གངས་པོམ་ས་མོང་
མོང་པོས་སེམས་བརྒྱུད་

ཞིགས་སྦྱོར་སྨོན་འབྲིང་
ིར་བོད་པ་དང་སྨོན་བོད་

ཅུང་རུས་གྲུན་བོད་

ཐུང་བོལ་དབང་བོན་

གྲོང་དཔོན་བོན་

མོད་པ། བོད་བོན་

བཀྲ་ཤིས་སྐོར་བོད་

གྲོང་དཔོན་བོན་

མོད་པ། བོད་བོན་
བདེན་བཞི་བསྐྱུར་བསྣོད་པ།
སུ་གསེར་བཞི་བསྐྱུར་བསྣོད་པ།
དོན་དུ་བསྣོད་པ།
ཞེས་བྱ་བསྣོད་པ།

སྒྲུལ་དབང་ངན་དུ་བསྣོད་པ།
དོན་དུ་བསྣོད་པ།
ཞེས་བྱ་བསྣོད་པ།
ཞེས་བྱ་བསྣོད་པ།

ལོར་བཞི་བསྐྱུར་བསྣོད་པ།
སུ་གསེར་བཞི་བསྐྱུར་བསྣོད་པ།
དོན་དུ་བསྣོད་པ།
ཞེས་བྱ་བསྣོད་པ།

ཆོས་ཀྱི་བཞི་བསྐྱུར་བསྣོད་པ།
ATIŞA DİPAŇKARA SRİŅĀNA

J. K. Rechung

Many scholars have written about the life and works of the most renowned Pandita Atisa Dipankara Srijana (Tib: jo-so-rje dpal-lhan Atisa). Yet I undertake the task of attempting another account from Tibetan literary sources, not for merit but with the hope that it will furnish some further information for those interested.

Atisa was born in the Water-Horse year (882 A.D.) in the province called Zabor which was part of what was called Vangala. There have been different views on the part of scholars regarding the birth-place of Atisa. The Tibetan historians tend to locate the birth place at Vikramapura in the district of Dacca, now in Bangladesh. This was first stated by Bu-sön rin chen grub, and later by Seng-pa mkhan-po ye-shes dpal-byor and Taranatha. Another great scholar Tshogling yongze yeshi gyalshen, in his account of the Lam-rim bla-brgyud ram-thar (the biography of lineage of the doctrine of Lam-rim, the graded path to enlightenment) has also mentioned that Atisa was actually born in a place not far from Vikramapura temple. I, too, share the same view as my own research on Atisa's life and works in Tibet substantiates the general view. Moreover, Nagpo brjeshi, who was acquainted with Atisa and spent many years with him, mentioned in his text Sleti-pa brgyad-bcu-pa (Eighty slokas in praise of Atisa) that Vikramapura was the birth-place of Atisa.
Atisa was honored both in India and Tibet for his great contribution to Buddhism. With his magnetic personality and profound knowledge of Buddhism, he converted several renowned heretics and their followers into Buddhists, with the result that Buddhism spread far and wide.

Tshegling yongzin ye shes gyalshen in lam-rim bla-brgyud rnam-thar (p. 154) writes that during one of Atisa’s tours as a prince around the city, he came across his chief tutelary deity, the goddess Tökar, in the form of a young lady attired in white standing among the crowd of people. She addressed him personally and advised him to stay clear of the desires of the world. She told him that once he was overcome by these desires, he would find it very difficult to rid himself of them. By doing so, she said that he would be able to retain his personal morals and purity. Through his one hundred and fifty two former lives (skyen-rab/skicas) Atisa had attained the status of Pandita with the highest form of pure and moral conduct.

Atisa underwent thirteen months of hardship on the journey across the seas in a boat in order to pay a visit to the Lama Serlingpa (Achārya Suvarṇadvīpi), who resided on a remote island. Atisa stayed there for twelve years, during the period of which he acquired the knowledge of Bāṅ-gaṇa manyan-brje (ātsa-parśa-samantaparivarta). This doctrine was transmitted by Lord Buddha himself through Maitreya, Shantideva and other saints to Serlingpa. Moreover, he was the master of all spiritual knowledge including aspects of Tantrayāna and Sūtrayāna. At the time of returning to India from Suvarṇadvīpa, his chief Guru Achārya Suvarṇadvīpi (gser-gling-pa) gave him a golden statue of Lord Buddha which was found in his early age and consecrated him as the master of the Doctrine.
When Atisa was at Bodh Gaya, a battle was fought between king Nāyapāla (c. 1038-1055 A.D.) of Magadha and king Karana (karaṇa) of the West. The battle lasted for many days. Since they could not cause any destruction to the cities, they destroyed all the temples and killed four monks and one Upādiksa. They even carried away all the properties of the temples. When the armies of king Nāyapāla slaughtered the troops of king Karana, Atisa took the latter under his protection and so saved many lives. He then brought the struggle to an end. (For details vide Manjusharī’s *The History of Bengal*).

During the reign of king Mahapāla, Atisa was invited to the university of Vikramasila. Inside the temple of the university the king had the portrait of Atisa done in fresco paintings on the left wall of the temple and that of the great Nāgārjuna on the right wall. This was done to imply that Atisa was as great and learned as the renowned Buddhist Āchārya Nāgārjuna (1st half of 2nd century A.D.). This university was built by king Dharmapāla, who was a great patron of Mahāyāna Buddhism and who ruled over Bengal for twenty years. In the 12th century and later during the Turkish invasion, like the other Buddhist establishments and universities, the Vikramasila university too was destroyed. Later, he was given the charge of eighteen monasteries. Buddhism started flourishing all over the area. During those days Pandita of West, East and Central India held Atisa in great esteem and he was recognised as master of all the Tantra and Sūtra.

At one time, Naropa, the founder of the Bk’u-rgyud-pa sect visited the Vikramasila University when Atisa was there. He was given a grand reception by the scholars at
the university. Atisa escorted the saint into the university holding his right hand. Naropa then entrusted Atisa with the task of upholding the Dharma. Atisa told him that while Naropa would be compared to the sun and the moon, Atisa was only a fly and as such he would not be able to illustrate the earth as Naropa could. Naropa replied that he would soon leave and that he could find no one more suitable than Atisa for the task in hand. About twenty days after this Naropa passed away.

The goddess Tārā was his guide throughout his life. She protected him from all threats, and he was blessed with the divine power of clearing all his doubts with her. The Buddha, and especially the deities Tārā and Avalokiteśvara, directed him to Tibet and saw him through all the hazards that he met on the way. About a century before his arrival, Atisa in Tibet Buddhism was rapidly declining there. The renegade Tibetan king Lazo dorjé attempted to wipe out the Buddhism faith by persecuting the monks and by destroying all the temples and statues of the Buddhist faith. As such, Buddhism deteriorated and corrupt debasing rituals prevailed over the religion in Tibet. The later kings of Tibet, Ye-sho-bod and Byang-chub-lung therefore, asked Atisa to visit Tibet and restore the pure doctrine there and so establish the true faith.

The original idea of Atisa having to go to Tibet was formed when Atisa was, in one of his previous incarnations, Vinana, the lama Domonpo (Rin-mong-chen-pa). While in discussion with the prince Rana-pa (Shon-schog-chang) in Indya, he told the prince that Tibet was lacking in the true faith of religion and that the people were failing to lead a happy
and contested life. He asked the prince to take birth in Tibet as a king when he would invite Vimala from India in order to carry out the reform.

In rudam Buchi it is said that during one of the discussions between Vimala and prince Rama Praja a sound from heaven was suddenly heard saying "the Protectors of the World and Heaven, the Victorious Guru and the spiritual sons are now gathered in Odiyana; the future gathering will be in the Land of Snow. For millions of years to come, you two, Guru and disciple, will remain inseparable for the benefit of living beings like sandalwood and its fragrance." The prince then said to his Guru Vimala, "the melodious sound we heard as oracles from the sky prophesying about the past, present and future was divine. Today we had many auspicious omens on this gathering."

The Lama, then gave prince Rama Praja a discourse in the Three Jewels. He added that to the east of Odiyana there was a place called Dobkedan (Vajrasamthita), where hundreds of three times attained their enlightenment. And in its north there was a country called the Land of Snow—Tibet, where the religion was yet to flourish and where the demons were destroying the living beings with all their evil power. "There," the Lama said, "I will send my emanation (Parasambhava) to control the demons and to protect people from the corrupt practices and the evil spirits, and lead them to peace and happiness. Before I send my emanation to help the people, you send your incarnation in the form of kirt (Songtsen Gampo) to protect its people and to invite the real emanation of Lord Padma from China, Akshobhya Vajra (Mikyo norpo) and from Nepal Mahāgiri-vajra (Champa dorje) with your different
manifots. To protect the people from eight fearful happenings
two goddesses, Mārīcā (Od-zer-can-ma/Gya-sa) and Mānjusūri
(Khra-gnyer-can-ma/Hal-ma), must be invited. Then only can
the religion flourish. In that country."

"To the north of Central Tibet, you should take birth
in a noble family whom everyone can respect and bless your
emancipation to invite me to Tibet from India. Then only can
we liberate sentient beings from misery of Sansara". (Kadral
Rabgon vol. Ka, Folio 75-76).

Once when Atisha was praying to his tutelary deity Avalokiteśvara to find out whether there were any restrictions or
obstructions on his going to Tibet, Avalokiteśvara appeared
in his own form and said: "O holy one, you know what the
secret teachings of the past, where you will find your tutelary
deity, the Goddess Tārā (Rje-btsun sgrol-ma), who is looking
ger the welfare of the living beings. There you will find
your disciples waiting for your guidance."

With prayers Atisha bowed in front of the image of his
deity and asked whether the teachings of Buddha would flourish
in Tibet or not if he went there, whether he would be able
to fulfill the desire of Dharmaraja of Tibet, and thirdly,
whether there were any hazards to his life there, it was
the goddess Tārā who said that his going to Tibet would
be of great value to all the beings there, and particularly
to an upāsīka. But, she said, his life would be shortened
by twenty years. Atisha, however made his journey to Tibet
through Nepal in 1042 A.D.

Upon Atisha's arrival in Tibet, he sent a messenger
to the king Byang-chub-bshad to inform him of his arrival.
The king was elated at the news and remembered his dream of the previous night. He said that he had seen a sun rising from west and a moon from the east. They both rose in the sky towards each other and upon coming in contact, the king saw the whole world illuminated, the sky clear of dust and clouds and the stars at their brightest. He thought it was a beautiful sign befitting the great occasion.

Atisa was escorted to the Tshe-ling (mcho-gling) monastery by the king. Upon seeing the paintings of the deities on the wall, Atisa composed a string of hymns on the spot, one in praise of the deities. The king and the Lobsang Rinchen Zangpo were astonished and so moved that they asked Atisa to be their Guru. It was here that Atisa wrote his well-known text Padhigaghapradipa. The scholars of Tibet held that there was a doctrine here which was equal to that of any holy text. This was mainly due to the fact that Padhigaghapradipa, though not long, contained the essence of all other texts.

Atisa spent three years in Sga-ris, nine years in Vrethang (smya-tshan), and five years in other places of Central Tibet. It was under Atisa’s influence that the famous Kadampa sect sprang up. The word Kadampa means the attempt of a person to take in each and every word of the Buddhas’ teachings in order to attain enlightenment. He also introduced a doctrine divided into seven parts (Chen-khas lha-ba-la-ba-sna-sgruan-dan) four of which concern four different doctrines. The rest include the Tripiṭaka. This doctrine is a very popular one among the Tibetans even today.

During Atisa’s stay at Sanyê, he was delighted to see many Sanskrit manuscripts in Pheling and remarked that it was difficult to preserve such Sanskrit manuscripts even in India.
He then visited Lhasa at the invitation of Kong-thugs-\-pa'i shes-rab. On his arrival at the city, Jo-wo thu-je chen-po (svatākṣītāvāra) the patron deity of Tibet, appeared in white robe to receive Atisa saying “Welcome Maṇḍarītā, the Victorious!” On seeing and hearing the patron deity of Tibet, Atisa ran forward towards the deity in order to pay his respect, but Jo-wo thu-je chen-po disappeared. The other people who had not seen the deity questioned Atisa about his strange behavior so which he replied that he had seen a white robed apparition which he knew was Jo-wo thu-je chen-po.

Later when he visited the Gtsug-lag-khang, he wondered whether there was any historical account behind the foundation of such a great temple. Meanwhile, an old beggar woman, reading Atisa's mind, asked him whether he wanted a full account of the establishment of the Gtsug-lag-khang. Atisa at once knew that this beggar woman was no ordinary beggar but none goddess in disguise. He told her that he wanted an account of the Gtsug-lag-khang. She then said that there was a vase-shaped pillar in the Gtsug-lag-khang and if Atisa dug two and a half fathoms deep under it, he would find the key to the establishment of the Gtsug-lag-khang. She told him not to utter a word about it to anyone.

When Atisa began digging under the vase-shaped pillar for the manuscript, the deity who was guarding the manuscript told him that he would be given only a day to complete copying the manuscript. Unfortunately, Atisa could not complete copying the manuscript and had to place it back under the pillar again. This great historical account of Tibet is called 'Be'a-chens Ka'-Khol-ma', is honour of the great Atisa and has brought the greatness of the Gtsug-lag-khang in the light of many.
During his stay in Nyethang, one of his chief disciples, Bsho-rgyud-po continued for days and nights discussing with Atisa the paths of the past, present and future Buddhas who went through the various stages to attain enlightenment.

In the year 1054 A.D. at Nyethang, Atisa left this world for Tusshu heaven. He was reborn there as Deva, Nam-nykhang dri-ma met-pa.

It is due to Atisa that the Tibetans are such staunch Buddhists and have been so, ever since Atisa came to Tibet.

NOTES

1. Mtho-lding (gser-gyi-lha-khang) was founded by Rinchen-bzang-po but according to the Blue Annals and Pema Karpo Chojung, Lha-bla-ma ye-shes-tod founded the monastery. This monastery is situated in the Sutlej river valley about 80 miles south west of Kartok (For detail see 'Bsam-gling rgyas-hshad by T.V. Wylie).

2. Nyethang is a famous place in Tibetan history in central Tibet. One of the greatest apostles of Buddhism, Atisa Dipankara died in Nyethang in 1054 A.D. on his way back to India (G. Tucci, Lhassa and beyond, pp. 69-70).

3. Bk’ha-gdam lha-chos bdun-idan (skt. Saptadeva-dvarma), Atisa introduced the Four Deities: Buddha Sahyamuni, bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, Tāra and Acala, and the three fold Doctrine of the Buddha, that is Sīla, Vinaya and Abhidharma, as his own individual (personal) deities and his own individually selected Doctrine. The seven elements are collectively known as the doctrine of Kadam Lhacho Dundun. (Kadam Phacho, pt. II, SRIT, 1978).


3. Lam-rim bla-brgyud rnam-thar by Tshe-gling yongs-'dzin ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (C. 1713-1793)

4. Bstdod-pa brgyas-bcu-pa (Hymn in praise in eighty verses) by Nag-tsho tshul-khrim rgyal-ba. Nag-tsho was the constant companion of Atisa for nineteen years. After the teacher passed away he got a scroll prepared by the Indian artisan Kripa-pa. Nag-tsho also wrote the Hymn on the back of the painted scroll (H. Eimer). Nag-tsho was the great Tibetan Lotsawa who succeeded in bringing Atisa to Tibet (1042 AD)

5. Bk'a-gdam Bu-chos (Life and teachings of Atisa's disciple) by 'Brom-ston rgyal-ba'i byung-gnas (1004-1064 A.D.) the chief disciple. He came from Dom family of North Tibet. He studied under Gyung-chos mgon and received his Upasaka ordination from Rgyal-gyi zang-chen. He also learnt Prajñāpāramitā, Tantra and Sūtra from Se-btsun dbang-Phyug gzhon-nu, and grammar, etymology etc from Pandita Smriti who was then resident in Tibet. When he was 41 years old he met Atisa in Purang (Western Tibet) and became one of his chief disciple. He spent 11 years with Atisa and acquired all the guru's accomplishments. After Atisa, Domton became head of Atisa's followers and founded the Neding Monastery where he stayed till he passed away at the age of 60 (Kadam Phacho, SRIT, Pt. I, 1977).
Some scholars say that Atisa did not receive Tantric teachings and hence did not give Tantric initiations since it is forbidden for a monk to do so. They would substantiate this by quoting three slokas from Bodhichapradipa. Evidently they have misinterpreted the slokas as there is much deeper mystic meaning in them.

The later revival of Buddhism began following the death of King Lang Darma in Eastern and Western Tibet in the 11th Century and after the Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo (985-1055 A.D.). During this period, Pandita Acharya Marpo also named Shes-rab gsang-ba (11th Century A.D.) from Odinya and a disciple of Kashmirin Ratsa-vajra, visited Tibet (G.P. Koerich The Blue Annals pt. II p. 1649-50. The Asiatic Society, Calcutta 1953). He was a competent and well-known scholar both in India and in Tibet. But his disciple Pandita Shambub mgon-po taught that a beginner in Tantric practices could be given Las-rgya (private Sakti) during the secret initiation. This was of great harm to the moral vow taken by the monks, Atisa, therefore, has objected to this in Bodhichapradipa. It however does not mean that a monk cannot receive Tantric teachings and initiations. It was clearly mentioned by Kun-mkhyen 'Jam-'byang bsñhad-pa' rdo-rje (11th Century A.D.) in his work Lam-pi'm rnam-bsñhad lung-tig gter-dzod vol. 4 (NGA), p. 424 (New Statesman Press, New Delhi 55).

Most of the Tantric texts mentioned that the best disciple to give Tantric initiation is one who has obtained the three following vows: the individual liberation vows (Pratimokṣa-sāṃvara ṣo-sor-ṭhar pa'i-sdom-pa); the Bodhisattva vows (Bodhisattvavasāṃpara/Byangchu sems-dpa'i-sdom-pa); and the tantric vows (Mantra saṃvara/gsang-sngags-kyi-sdom-pa).
While looking through many Sanskrit manuscripts during the stay in Samye, Atisa was filled with pride at the thought that he was the most learned in Tantric literature. At that time in his dream a Dakini appeared and showed him many Tantric texts he had never seen before. This humbled Atisa and it has been mentioned in all Atisa's biographies written by different Tibetan scholars. This shows that Atisa had received various Tantric teachings and initiations.

- J.K. Rechung
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